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PREFACE

This report presents the results of the 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Activity Survey and is prepared by the Statistics and Forecast Branch, Planning Analysis Division, Office of Aviation Policy and Plans (APO-1).

This survey provides information about the activity of the general aviation and air taxi aircraft fleet. It excludes commuters. The information obtained from the survey enables the Federal Aviation Administration to monitor the general aviation and air taxi fleet so that the FAA can, among other activities, anticipate and meet demand for National Airspace System (NAS) facilities and services, assess the impact of regulatory changes on the general aviation and air taxi fleet, and implement measures to ensure the safe operation of all aircraft in the airspace.

Each year the information for the survey is collected using a statistically designed sample survey. The sample is selected from all general aviation and air taxi aircraft registered with the FAA. Appendix A of this report provides a detailed description of the survey, its history, and the survey sample design.

To be more responsive to the needs of the general aviation community, a number of major changes have been incorporated into the survey over the years. Changes made since 1993 are detailed in the Appendix and in previous publications. For the 1996 Survey a new use category--public use--was included in the survey. This was to estimate active aircraft and hours flown in fulfilling government functions by aircraft owned or leased by Federal, state or local government. These aircraft and hours had previously been included in estimates for one of the other 13 listed use categories.

Also, in conjunction with the survey for calendar year 1996, a sample of aircraft owners that did not respond to the mail survey were contacted by telephone. This telephone survey collected information to determine aircraft utilization differences between mail survey respondents and nonrespondents. The last such survey was conducted for 1990. The current survey results suggest that nonrespondents had higher utilization rates than previously estimated. Estimates for 1996 have been revised to reflect the nonresponse bias indicated by the new telephone survey. Summary data have been revised for the years 1991 through 1995 to reflect a gradual shift in nonresponse bias from 1990 to 1996 estimates. Revisions to more detailed information from past surveys is not available.

Information is provided on both historical (1987-1995) and current (1996) general aviation and air taxi activity measures. Detail is given as to the principal purpose of operation, flying conditions, fuel consumption, and hours of airframe and engine activity. Further, the survey inventories the installation of global positioning navigation equipment. Finally, activity data is also classified by fixed and retractable landing gear systems.

Notable changes for aircraft and activity indicated:

- the active general aviation and air taxi fleet totaled 187,312 in 1996, an increase of 2.6 percent over revised 1995 fleet totals;
- the active piston and turbine fixed-wing fleets recorded increases of 1.5 and 6.8 percent, respectively, in 1996;
- active general aviation and air taxi aircraft flew 26.1 million hours in 1996, a 1.7 percent increase over revised 1995 hours;

- hours flown by active piston and turbine fixed-wing aircraft increased 1.2 and 8.5 percent, respectively, in 1996; and
- active general aviation and air taxi aircraft flew an average of 139.3 hours in 1996, 0.9 percent less than in 1995.

Suggestions and comments about this report are welcome and will be given careful consideration in planning future editions. Please direct any comments to Mr. George Stamas, Statistics and Forecast Branch, phone number (202) 267-7924, FAX (202) 267-5370 or e-mail george.stamas@faa.dot.gov.

John M. Rodgers
Director of Aviation Policy and Plans

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
PUBLICATION INFORMATION FOR PLANNING ANALYSIS DIVISION, STATISTICS TEAM'S PUBLICATIONS.....	i
PREFACE.....	iii
FAA REGIONAL BOUNDARIES.....	x
I. HISTORICAL GENERAL AVIATION AND AIR TAXI ACTIVITY MEASURES...1-1	
1.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Aircraft by Primary Use by Aircraft Type.....	1-2
1.2 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Active Aircraft by Aircraft Type, 1987 - 1996.....	1-5
1.3 Active General Aviation and Air Taxi Aircraft by Primary Use, 1987-1996.....	1-8
1.4 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown by Actual Use by Aircraft Type.....	1-9
1.5 General Aviation and Air Taxi Aircraft Total Hours Flown by Aircraft Type, 1987 - 1996.....	1-12
1.6 Active General Aviation and Air Taxi Aircraft Total Hours Flown by Use, 1987 - 1996.....	1-15
1.7 General Aviation and Air Taxi Aircraft Average Hours Flown by Aircraft Type, 1987 - 1996.....	1-16
1.8 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Aircraft and Total Hours Flown by FAA Region and State of Based Aircraft.....	1-19
II. COMMON GENERAL AVIATION AND AIR TAXI ACTIVITY MEASURES.....2-1	
2.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours by Aircraft Type.....	2-2

II. COMMON GENERAL AVIATION AND AIR TAXI ACTIVITY MEASURES (Con't)

2.2	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours by Aircraft Manufacturer/Model Group.....	2-4
2.3	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours by Region of Based Aircraft.....	2-19
2.4	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours by State of Based Aircraft.....	2-20
2.5	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Number of Landings by Region of Based Aircraft by Aircraft Type.....	2-23
2.6	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Landings in Local Flight by Region of Based Aircraft by Aircraft Type.....	2-26
2.7	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Landings in Cross Country Flight by Region of Based Aircraft by Aircraft Type.....	2-29
2.8	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours by Age of Aircraft.....	2-32
2.9	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown in Ranges of Hours Flown by Age of Aircraft.....	2-33
2.10	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours by Number of Aircraft and Total Hours Flown in Each Flight Hour Range by Aircraft Type.....	2-35
2.11	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, Total Flight Hours and Average Flight Hours for Single and Multi-Turbine Engine Rotorcraft by Aircraft Manufacturer/Model Group.....	2-41

III. PRIMARY AND ACTUAL USE.....3-1

3.1	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Number of Aircraft by Primary Use by Aircraft Type.....	3-2
3.2	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown by Actual Use by Aircraft Type.....	3-6
3.3	1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Nautical Miles Flown by Actual Use by Aircraft Type.....	3-10

	<u>Page</u>
IV. FLYING CONDITIONS.....	4-1
4.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown by Day/Night by Aircraft Type.....	4-2
4.2 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown Under VMC Conditions by Day/Night by Aircraft Type.....	4-4
4.3 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown Under IMC Conditions by Day/Night by Aircraft Type.....	4-6
4.4 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown by Day/Night by Region of Based Aircraft.....	4-8
4.5 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown Under VMC Conditions by Day/Night by Region of Based Aircraft.....	4-9
4.6 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown Under IMC Conditions by Day/Night by Region of Based Aircraft.....	4-10
4.7 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown by Day/Night by Manufacturer/Model Group.....	4-11
4.8 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Hours Flown Under IMC Conditions and VMC Conditions by Manufacturer/Model Group.....	4-26
4.9 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Active Aircraft and Total Hours Flown by Flight Plan by Aircraft Type.....	4-41
V. FUEL CONSUMPTION.....	5-1
5.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Average Fuel Consumption Rate and Total Fuel Consumed by Aircraft Type.....	5-2
VI. AIRFRAME HOURS AND ENGINE ACTIVITY.....	6-1
6.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total and Average Airframe Hours Per Active Aircraft by Aircraft Type.....	6-2
6.2 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total and Average Airframe Hours Per Active Aircraft by Aircraft Manufacturer/Model Group.....	6-4
6.3 1996 Number of Engines on Active General Aviation and Air Taxi Aircraft and Average Hours Per Engine by Engine Manufacturer/ Model Group.....	6-22

	<u>Page</u>
VII. GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS.....	7-1
7.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Global Positioning System by Aircraft Type (Includes Air Taxi Aircraft/Excludes Commuter Aircraft).....	7-2
7.2 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Global Positioning System by Primary Use (Includes Air Taxi Aircraft/Excludes Commuter Aircraft).....	7-7
7.3 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Global Positioning System by Region of Based Aircraft (Includes Air Taxi Aircraft/Excludes Commuter Aircraft).....	7-10
7.4 1994 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Global Positioning System by State of Based Aircraft (Includes Air Taxi Aircraft/Excludes Commuter Aircraft).....	7-12
7.5 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Global Positioning System by Age of Aircraft (Includes Air Taxi Aircraft/Excludes Commuter Aircraft).....	7-20
VIII. LANDING GEAR SYSTEM.....	8.1
8.1 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Fixed or Retractable Landing Gear System by Aircraft Type.....	8-2
8.2 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Total Annual Hours and Percent Hours Flown with a Fixed or Retractable Landing Gear System by Aircraft Type.....	8-4
8.3 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Population Size, Active Aircraft, and Total Number of Aircraft with a Fixed or Retractable Landing Gear System by Aircraft Manufacturer/Model Group.....	8-6
8.4 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Active Aircraft and Total Number of Aircraft with a Fixed or Retractable Landing Gear System by Age of Aircraft.....	8-21

	<u>Page</u>
APPENDIX A. Methodology for the 1996 General Aviation and Air Taxi Activity (GAATA)	
Survey.....	A-1
1. Overview.....	A-2
2. Survey Coverage.....	A-3
3. Survey Method.....	A-6
A.1 Summary of Response Information.....	A-6
4. Sample Design.....	A-7
A.2 Sample and Population Distribution by Aircraft Type.....	A-8
A.3 Confidence of Interval Estimates.....	A-9
5. Response Rate.....	A-11
A.4 Response Rate by Aircraft Type.....	A-12

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
A-1 1996 GENERAL AVIATION AND AIR TAXI ACTIVITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	A-4
A-2 FIRST 1996 GAATA SURVEY COVER LETTER.....	A-16
A-3 SECOND 1996 GAATA SURVEY COVER LETTER.....	A-18
A-4 THIRD 1996 GAATA SURVEY COVER LETTER.....	A-20

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Tables</u>	<u>Page</u>
A.1 SUMMARY OF RESPONSE INFORMATION.....	A-6
A.2 SAMPLE AND POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AIRCRAFT TYPE.....	A-8
A.3 CONFIDENCE OF INTERVAL ESTIMATES.....	A-9+
A.4 RESPONSE RATE BY AIRCRAFT TYPE.....	A-12

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

FAA REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

INCLUDING LOCATIONS OF REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND CENTERS



